

Succeeding In Our Spiritual Lives

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To reach our goals, we always have to start from the reality. Of course, we have a shining vision and example before us, but we must begin from our present state and progress from there, step by step.

As we know, 1988 is a very providential year, and America's responsibility is crucial. In Korea, Father is now organizing the Citizens' Federation for the Unification of the Fatherland. To accomplish the reunification of the Korean peninsula, Father is urging us to have a heart of longing toward the North Korean people. We are all aware of the content of the ideological war, but actually, real unification must come through love.

In order to accomplish this dispensational goal, America must be leading the providence by following the will of God. Therefore, our responsibility is to do exactly what Father is asking. If we can fulfill Father's requests by doing our portion of responsibility-then God can do His 95 percent to accomplish His will completely. His desire is nothing less than the unification of the world through true love.

Hard work is not enough

We don't have to become directly involved with all the different issues. Our primary concern should be, 'Am I fulfilling my responsibility before Heavenly Father and True Parents? Whatever mission I am given, am I accomplishing it joyfully, happily, excitedly, doing even more than is required?'

Hard work is not enough. Father has said clearly that the Kingdom of Heaven doesn't come only from the effort of people on this earth but through the cooperation between the spirit world and the physical world. From a common-sense point of view, what Father is asking us to accomplish is outrageous-to teach and serve in all our 360 homes, educate other ministers, and bring one spiritual child every month. The only way we can fulfill this is by mobilizing millions of good spirits. They are already prepared to work.

But unless we fulfill our human responsibility, God cannot send the spirit world to us. The fundamental key is unity. Without unity, the spirit world can do nothing. Recently this point has been confirmed repeatedly through messages from Heavenly Father and Heung Jin Nim. God is telling us we must unite, repent, and change; otherwise, nothing will happen. If we can trust God and unite, then the spirit world will work. If we can move the spirit world, we won't have to be anxious about accomplishing either home church or witnessing.

Three or four days before this workshop, I asked Heung Jin Nim, "What guidance shall I give to the brothers and sisters?" He said, "Don't worry, I will show you.'" Then a brother discovered a motto that Father had written in Chinese calligraphy for the New York church many years ago, which says, 'A unified spirit is the foundation of the holy city.'" So we brought this here to be the motto for our seminar today. I feel that Heung Jin Nim is already clearly showing us the right direction.

The fundamental principle or formula for accomplishing the will of God is very simple. Man's responsibility is to lay the foundation to receive the Messiah, become reborn, and together with the Messiah reach perfection. If we can establish the foundation to receive the Messiah, then True Parents' spirit will be right here in our centers. That means all the good spirit world surrounding the True Parents, centering on Heung Jin Nim, will be here in the midst of us.

The question becomes, "Is God truly living with us in our center? Would True Parents be happy to come here and stay with us?" We have to develop that kind of relationship, whether we are in a church center,

on a witnessing team, on MFT, or in any department. If we are secure in knowing True Parents could dwell happily in our center, we have accomplished the foundation to receive the Messiah. Then home church will be no problem at all.

The proper relationship

So, how do we start? With a central figure. Leaders, as central figures, are in a position to take responsibility for whatever happens in the center, without accusing members, without escaping, or taking it easy. A leader's lifestyle of total dedication is very important. This is the foundation of faith. Then, unity with the central figure is the foundation of substance. Actually, leaders and members are both responsible for creating unity. The leader should do what is right and the members should also do what is right. Both have many things to be resolved -fallen nature, laziness, lack of clarity, and lack of motivation. Yet, we have to understand our proper Cain/ Abel relationship in order to go the formula course and fulfill the three blessings.

As we know, the first blessing means the accomplishment of individual perfection. We must restore our hearts, step by step, through the eight stages of internal restoration from the servant of servants position on up-and then spread that foundation from the individual level to the universal level. By inheriting Father's victory, we have the special privilege of being considered to have restored the universe through fulfilling only the tribal-level accomplishment, which is the home church. After the accomplishment of the home church, we are free from Satan, and we will find ourselves in the direct dominion of God. Once the first blessing is restored, the second and third blessings will be secured, and then we are qualified to become citizens of heaven.

But until we restore the first blessing, we cannot move into the direct dominion. All of us, except the True Family, are still living in the indirect dominion of God. Since we have no right to claim the first blessing, it isn't possible to claim the second or third blessing no matter how old we are, spiritually or physically. Therefore, we must be careful when we consider how to provide for our families and take responsibility for our future. We are not actually in the position to claim anything for ourselves, yet we must substantially care for our families. What do we do?

Since God is love, God will open the way. I must first offer everything to God completely; then God will give me everything through the True Parents, or more practically speaking, through my central figure. My first "owner" must be God; my second owner, True Parents, and the church; my third owner is myself-I can own myself as a third owner. Fundraising money, for example, should be offered to Heavenly Father through the central figure, and then the central figure provides the money for the members according to what they need.

Once we receive it through this official channel, we can use the money for whatever we require. God gave it to us, and Satan can say nothing about what God owns. But if we don't go through this channel, the money will be claimed by Satan because we are not actually qualified to own anything. Gradually our spiritual life may decline, and we may be tempted to use the money for some unprincipled purpose.

Father himself said that until 1981 he could not make decisions about what his family should do, nor could he have any personal bank account. Even for True Father himself, all ownership is God's.

Look for God's idea

Therefore, until we accomplish home church, our attitude should be, "I belong to God. I have given myself to God. God's opinion should be my opinion." We must always check ourselves: "Am I an unconditional offering on the altar of God, or am I claiming a lot of things for myself based on my own point of view?"

The most fundamental point of religious life is to give ownership of yourself to God. Therefore, you look for God's idea, plan, intention, opinion, and desire. But the exciting thing is, once you give yourself to God, you receive your life back from Him and the value of your life becomes absolutely precious and eternal. By giving yourself to God, you never lose anything. Thus, your one life has tremendous eternal value.

But what do we usually do instead? We don't like to give ourselves to God, so we figure out many sneaky ways to keep things for ourselves.

For example, you may make arrangements to do something you feel is important. Then you go to your central figure, tell him it is very important, and ask if you can do it. The leader asks why, and you give him many good reasons, but the point is that you already arranged everything by yourself beforehand. That's not making an offering of yourself. Already you are announcing your decision to your central figure for him to accept. If he doesn't say yes, you rebel and claim he doesn't understand you or love you, or care at all about you. This is the reversal of dominion, going the sneaky way.

The leader is the one who stands in the position of the central figure and who has the responsibility for the center, and he should make the final decision. But sometimes leaders are afraid to say no and so they grant such requests. This reversal of proper order makes a mess of everything.

Fallen nature number one comes when you don't like God's desire. You must always check which comes first, God's will or your situation, God's desire or your desire, or God's needs or your needs. Self-centeredness dominates when this point is reversed.

If you don't like God's plan, already internal separation exists, which manifests eventually in external separation leaving the proper position. Thirdly, you take dominion centered on yourself, not on your Abel figure. You have hundreds of reasons why your idea and lifestyle are more important, and because you are afraid your central figure would refuse to give you permission, you disappear. You go somewhere else, and do something completely separate from what your center is doing. This is fallen nature number four, multiplying evil. This is the process of how fallen nature gradually grows inside us.

Our real concern

But the main point is, who comes first God or myself? True Parents or myself? The will of God or my situation and desire? To sacrifice and separate from Satan is to overcome this selfish desire. If we don't overcome this, then we will inevitably progress through the four stages of fallen nature.

You may not see so clearly what is happening when you are in the first and second stages, but in the third stage, you are actually creating your own plan to fulfill the first blessing centering on yourself. Everything is well organized and arranged to justify your disobedience. But no matter how "good" your reasons are, your action is unprincipled; it is a reversal of dominion, and Satan can claim it. Then, on the level of the second blessing, this kind of idea can easily spread quickly if people with the same selfish desires come together. A different system can be substantially created that is entirely separate from God's will.

When we reflect on our spiritual life with this fundamental understanding, we realize there is a lot of self-centeredness going on inside us self-centered desires, hopes, ideas, opinions, and relationships. Such unprincipled thinking prevents us from making a pure offering of ourselves to God and from receiving God's blessing and can lead to self-destruction.

This is tragic because each brother and sister is very precious. Every one of us originally joined with a good, unselfish motivation. We gave everything to God, but then if we lose inspiration and start to claim things for ourselves, our offering becomes impure. When Abraham made the offering, he forgot to cut the dove and pigeon. Satan claimed the entire offering, and God's providence was destroyed. Likewise, even though we may work hard externally, if our motivation is not repentful and pure, Satan invades us deep inside. Having a God-centered motivation should be our real concern.

Making your own secret arrangements means you feel you are so important that you don't want to give yourself to God. Because you have not died to your old self, as Jesus taught, you cannot have life. If you want to live, you should be prepared to die for the sake of God's will. Only then can you truly live. The unprincipled fallen world and things must die completely-otherwise there can be no resurrection. Crucify your own selfishness; then a new true self will be born.

Abraham made an offering of Isaac. We must all ask ourselves, "What is the Isaac in my life?" When we make a complete offering of our Isaac, then real blessings will come.

Because Abel is the channel of life, we must repent, change our life, and be reborn through our Abel figure. Otherwise, Satan will eventually invade. Abel is our real lifeline to God in the course of restoration. Therefore, it is a great blessing to have a central figure.